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ANDRÉE LACHAPELLE

sheets of ice on the river
as we leave the city
slowly
slow and cold
there can only be a future
filled with plenty
when nature has already
taken that much away

Andrée Lachapelle has worked as a graphic artist, web designer and a photographer. She lives in Toronto.

DONA STURMANIS

Mother surmises on Dad's demise

"You did a good job."
the home nurses told me.
They wanted to move him
to a hospital to die.
I said no:
My husband will die
at home and I
will be his doctor
and his nurse,
as I have been
for fifty years.
My son-in-law and I
sat at the diningroom table
the morning he died,
drank coffee, smoked
cigarettes,
looked over at his body
til the cremation people
arrived.
His beret,
His Haida-carved paddle,
To take him across the river,
went with his body
into the final fire.
It was really that simple.
Let's get rid of that bed, I said
to my son-in law.
The one in which he had
slowly
disappeared over two years.
I had sat there and watched
him
become an outline of a man.

After he died,
I was hungry, so hungry.
I ate everything he could
not.

The afternoon
they took him away
my son-in-law & I
had Welsh rarebit
at an English pub.

I went to live with his wife,
my oldest daughter. "Eat,"
she said and I did.
Fresh orange juice,
Bagels with cream cheese.
Tuna melts and mushroom
soup.

Rainbow color salads,
crisp to the teeth.
Melons, sweet melons.
She fed me herbs. I told my
friends
she was experimenting on
me.

I didn't want to eat,

but I was so hungry.
I didn't want to be fat
but I was so thin.

I ate until the outline
of my woman
became filled in

Dona Sturmanis teaches writing at Okanagan University College in Kelowna, B.C. Her poetry has appeared in many magazines including Grain, Antigonish Review, White Wall Review, CV2 and The Dalhousie Review. She has published two poetry books: Viole(n)t Culture (Word is Out Press, 1996) and You Mistook Heaven (Kalamalka Press, 1998).